

The Materiality of Sacred Textiles in Europe (Padua/online, 21–22 Nov 24)

University of Padua, Padova, Palazzo Liviano, Aula Diano and Sala Sartori (in person and online), Nov 21–22, 2024

Valentina Baradel

International conference: The Materiality of Sacred Textiles in Europe from Antiquity to the Middle Ages.

Since Antiquity, textiles were used in funerary rituals; as furnishings within the shrines, decorating, dividing and concealing/revealing spaces and objects. They formed part of ritual trappings and were used to dress the divine images; special textiles were worn by the priests and by the dedicants as well as offered as gifts to the divinities; last, but not least, they were regarded as sacred objects possessing special powers. While often they were produced for the purpose, frequently such textiles were also passed down, patched, reused, and recycled, and thus charged with symbolic meanings, becoming “material memories”.

The aim of this conference is to champion a materiality approach – the notion that the physical properties of a cultural artefact have consequences for how the object is used – to the study of sacred textiles from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. It will explore how their study, usually viewed through a strictly disciplinary lens, can be enriched by focusing on the physical structures and raw materials of the objects and by combining the approaches of archaeology, history, and art history.

Organising Committee

Margarita Gleba, Università di Padova

Zuleika Murat, Università di Padova

Valentina Baradel, Università di Padova

To attend online please register at
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1NIu1f-7f6UYiUjjj0J5lqBKJCLKAvnwHeTm40s-yD0l/edit>

PROGRAMME

21 November - Palazzo Liviano, Aula Diano

9:00-9:15 Welcome and Introduction

Session I. Materiality and Perception of Sacred Textiles

Moderator: Giulia Zornetta, Università di Padova

9:15-9:45 Margarita Gleba, Università di Padova: Through the Scientific Looking Glass: The Unholy Materiality of Sacred Textiles

9.45-10:15 Lauren Bock, University of Texas at Austin: An Exploration of the Sensory Properties of

Fragrant Textiles in Antiquity

10:15-10:45 Alexandra Makin, Manchester Metropolitan University: The Sacred Materialities of Early Medieval Embroidery in England (450-1100 CE)

Discussion

Coffee Break

Session II. Textiles in Funerary Contexts

Moderator: Valentina Baradel, Università di Padova

11:30-12:00 Emeline Retournard, Université Clermont Auvergne: The Textiles from the Supposed Tomb of Odalric, Archbishop of Reims (10th Century; Marne, France)

12:00-12:30 Gretchen Meyers, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster (Pennsylvania): Textiles and Transitions: Etruscan Sacred Cloth at Birth, Marriage and Death

12:30-13:00 Maria Stella Busana, Margarita Gleba, Melania Gigante, Università di Padova: Funerary Textile Use in Ancient Mediterranean: Recent Discoveries from Sardinia and Mainland Italy

Discussion

Lunch Break

Session III. Dressing the Sacred

Moderator: Margarita Gleba, Università di Padova

15:00-15:30 Caroline Vogt, Abegg-Stiftung, Riggisberg (Switzerland): Gold-Embroidered Episcopal Shoes and Stockings of the High Middle Ages: Materials, Motifs and Meanings

15:30-16:00 Valentina Baradel, Università di Padova: Liturgical Vestments as Materialised Memories: The Embroidered Mitre for Jean de Marigny, Bishop of Beauvais

16:00-16:30 Mingzhu Lyu, University of Zurich: Experiencing the Sacred: The Medieval Embroidered Silk Skull Reliquary from Turku Cathedral

16:30-17:00 Juliette Calvarin, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin: Wrapped in Linen: The Holy Face and the Amice

Discussion

22 November - Palazzo Liviano, Sala Sartori

Session IV. Textiles and the Sacred

Moderator: Zuleika Murat, Università di Padova

9:15-9:45 Bela Dimova, Università di Padova: Textiles in Cult Contexts in the Aegean During the First Millennium BC

9:45-10:15 Sabine Schrenk and Petra Linscheid, Rheinische Friedrich Wilhelms-Universität Bonn: A "Textile Archive" on the Veneration of Bishop Ambrose in Milan

10:15-10:45 Emma Lyandres, New York University's Institute of Fine Art: The Padua Parokhet as Gateway to Jerusalem: A Sacred Textile in Early Modern Italy

10:45-11:15 Mina Miyamoto, Paris Lodron Universität Salzburg: Applications of Precious Textiles

in Sacred Manuscripts with Special Focus on the Spanish Silk Woven

Discussion

12:00 Closing Remarks

Reference:

CONF: The Materiality of Sacred Textiles in Europe (Padua/online, 21-22 Nov 24). In: ArtHist.net, Nov 6, 2024 (accessed Jul 16, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/43102>>.